

FCC MAIL SECTION

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554 Office of the Secretary

In the matter of)
UNRECORDED BY)

ET Docket No. 92-9

Redevelopment of Spectrum to)
Encourage Innovation in the)
Use of New Telecommunications)
Technologies)

To: The Commission

COMMENTS OF PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY OF COLORADO

Pursuant to Section 1.415 of the Commission's Rules, Public Service Company of Colorado (PSCo) hereby respectfully submits its comments on the Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM), FCC 92-9, released February 7, 1992, in the above captioned matter.

I. Introduction

Public Service Company of Colorado is an investor owned electric and gas utility operating transmission and distribution systems throughout the state of Colorado. PSCo operates an extensive private communications system to support the critical nature of the control and operations of these gas and electric systems.

Part of the PSCo private telecommunications system consists of 76 microwave stations in the 2 GHz band. Because of the long distances and the mountainous terrain in the PSCo service territory, our future plans also call for the use of the 2 GHz band to expand and upgrade the telecommunications network.

II. The 1850-2200 MHz Band Should Not Be Reallocated For The Creation Of A Spectrum Reserve

Public Service Company of Colorado opposes a re-allocation of spectrum in the 1850-2200 MHz band for the creation of a spectrum reserve for development of emerging technologies. If PSCo were forced to vacate this spectrum, there is some doubt that suitable replacement spectrum is available. Alternatives, such as common carriers or replacement by fiber systems, are generally unsuitable. The critical nature of gas and electric power system communications dictate control of these systems will rest with PSCo. Fiber optic solutions, used in many parts of this private system already, are not cost justified nor suitable alternatives to the existing 2 GHz microwave systems.

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We estimate the cost to replace the 2GHz stations in this system at approximately \$8 million. PSCo feels this is an unwarranted burden to place upon the rate payers of Colorado. Interrupting service on these microwave systems for the purpose of replacing these stations could be disastrous to the operation of the gas and electric transmission and distribution systems these 2 GHz microwave stations support.

PSCo recognizes that emerging technologies, such as Personal Communications Networks (PCN), could be deployed in the metropolitan areas of Colorado, but seriously doubt that these systems would ever be deployed in the rural areas.

Public Service Company of Colorado therefore urges the Commission to consider alternative bands, such as the 2500-2690 MHz "wireless cable" band as a possible "home" for the spectrum reserve.

III. Actions To Be Taken If 2 GHz Band Is Reallocated

PSCo urges that if the 2 GHz Band is re-allocated for emerging technologies, the Commission should grant indefinite co-primary status for all existing 2 GHz microwave systems and should permit reasonable system modifications and expansions. Public Service Company, in its ongoing operations, has plans to make several modifications to the existing 2 GHz microwave stations. Modifications contemplated include moving existing stations to new locations near the present locations as PSCo vacates old buildings and occupies new facilities in the normal upgrading of our service facilities, and making communications ties with neighboring utilities.

PSCo also urges the Commission, if the 2 GHz band is re-allocated, to adopt rules allowing for the use of voluntary negotiations between licensed users and the new service providers. Licensed users must be given the latitude to negotiate with potential new service providers to mitigate the impact such new operations might have on the existing stations in the 2 GHz band.

We also feel that under no circumstances should any new service in a re-allocated 2 GHz band be authorized on an unlicensed basis. Existing users would be unable to secure reimbursement from such unlicensed users should it become necessary to relocate an existing station to avoid interference. Indeed, the task of identifying an interfering source would be nearly impossible if such unlicensed activity were permitted.

IV. The 1710-1850 MHz Band Should Be Made Available For Displaced 2 GHz Users.

Public Service Company of Colorado urges the FCC and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) to commence discussions to open the 1710-1850 MHz Federal government spectrum for use by displaced 2 GHz users on a co-primary, non-interference basis. We feel that migrating to this adjacent band, where this might be practical, could mitigate some of the impact on the existing users. The 1710-1850 MHz band shares the same characteristics with the existing 2 GHz band, making the path engineering considerations less a concern, and in some cases, existing equipment such as transmitters, receivers, and antennas would be able to be re-tuned for use on these new frequencies, thereby saving considerable time, money, and outages on critical microwave systems.

V. The FCC Should Open The 4, 6, and 11 GHz Bands For Private Microwave Use

PSCo supports the Utilities Telecommunications Council "Petition for Rule Making," filed March 31, 1992, to make the 4 GHz, 6 GHz, and 11 GHz common carrier bands available for routine licensing in the Private Operational Microwave Service under Part 94, and to adopt appropriate channeling plans and technical standards to ensure that these bands are adequate to meet the needs of existing and future private microwave systems.

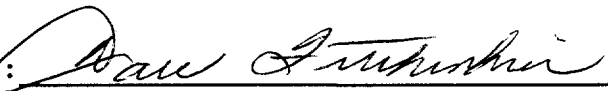
VI. Conclusion

Public Service Company of Colorado opposes the allocation of the 2 GHz band as a spectrum reserve. We feel that alternate spectrum, such as the 2500-2690 MHz band, is available to the Commission to form a spectrum reserve. If PSCo had to vacate this spectrum, or move even some of our 2 GHz stations to another frequency, we feel our critical electric and gas operations would be jeopardized, and our rate-payers would be saddled with an unnecessary expense.

PSCo supports a re-allocation concept that would include indefinite co-primary status for existing licenses and new technologies. PSCo also supports a market based approach between existing users and new technology licenses whereby the terms of any relocation or co-existence could be worked out between the affected parties.

Wherefore, The Premises Considered, Public Service Company of Colorado respectfully requests the Commission to consider these Comments in acting on the subject Notice of Proposed Rule Making.

Respectfully submitted,
Public Service Company of Colorado

By: 

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